

“I DID IT - YOU CAN TOO!”



FROM OIL TO THE CLASSROOM – A CAREER CHANGER PERSPECTIVE

After spending 36 years in the oil industry, I have come to teaching rather late and certainly count as a “career changer”! I loved science at school and studied chemical engineering, followed by a varied career both in the UK and overseas. I was inspired by the Now Teach programme that encourages experienced professionals into teaching, who in turn directed me to train with Xavier Teach SouthEast. My two training schools were absolutely excellent.

The staff were very welcoming (and forgiving), and offered precise, objective and encouraging feedback as they observed my early teaching. I learnt so much in a very short space of time. Xavier Teach SouthEast also provided an extremely effective and well-organised training programme, which was expertly dovetailed with the in-school teaching practice. The design of the programme itself was deeply anchored in research.

My learning curve was almost vertical at times, which made life both incredibly interesting and also rather tiring at times, but very rewarding. Whilst there is a lot still to learn, I am finding that my bank of skills and experience does help to bridge some of my lack of teaching experience. As I now develop as a teacher, I am continuing to find new ways of leveraging the content of my previous career. Also, confidence gained from working in business does go some way to help establish a good classroom culture. I do love the variety of the job, and am always very well supported by my school colleagues.

My advice to any new teachers starting in September would be to embrace the learning process and be patient with yourself. Teaching is a journey, and it's okay to make mistakes along the way. Build strong relationships with your colleagues and don't hesitate to seek their advice and support—they are invaluable resources. Always be open to feedback and use it as a tool for growth. Remember to stay flexible and adaptable, as every day in the classroom can bring new challenges and opportunities. Most importantly, keep your passion for teaching and your subject alive, as your enthusiasm will inspire your students. Enjoy the ride and celebrate the small victories along the way!

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